

# Rhode-Island Baptist.

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Vol. I.

JULY, 1824.

No. 10

## BEAUTIES OF FREE SALVATION.

The doctrines of *free grace*, which teach us that Christ "tasted death for every man," that whosoever would, might take of the waters of life freely, are so consonant with common sense, reason, the experience of Christians, and the word of God, that notwithstanding many, in effect, deny them, yet they are constrained to admit their general principles. For instance, those who advocate the doctrine of *invincible grace*, and tell us without this, men are like the dead in their graves, at the same time admit, that God requires nothing of his creatures beyond their ability; and tell us, that a limited and fixed number of individuals are elected to eternal life, and that this is the eternal purpose of God, yet, say, the blessings of the gospel are offered to all. Without more prefatory remarks, as our limits will not allow them, we shall proceed to mention a few of the beauties of free salvation.

I. *The doctrines of this system are founded on the principles of immutable justice.*

1. The creator of men requires of his creatures such things as they have power to perform. If he requires of them physical action, he has given them

physical ability. Are they required to walk? he has given them feet—to labour? he has given them hands—to see? they have eyes—to hear? they have ears. Does he require of them to exercise affection and benevolence toward each other? he has given them a heart, and “the milk of human kindness.” Does he make it their duty to be holy? he furnishes them with the means of grace, not only outward, but inward. His spirit strives with all—(a) Christ enlightens all—(b) the grace which is capable of producing salvation, appears to all. (c) Were not this the case, the universally acknowledged principle that God requires of men only according to their ability, would be overthrown. It would appear that he enjoined holiness, without imparting the needful ability. Nor can the force of this be evaded by bringing forward the scholastick and metaphysical distinction between natural and moral ability. Our present purpose will not allow us to expose, at large, the insufficiency of this refuge, for what we suppose, are the errors of the decree system. Two observations may, here, be sufficient. First, We should always allow the free exercise of our common sense. Doing this, we shall readily perceive, without the aid of Logick or metaphysics, that if God require a physical action, he has properly qualified us for the purpose—if a moral one, he has done the same; and that a physical action cannot be performed by moral power, neither a moral action by physical power. Second, we shall also perceive that those who talk so much of physical and moral ability, with a view to propagate Calvinism, are obliged in order to make any thing out of their subject, to suppose that men can perform a *moral action with natural ability.* We mean by *a moral action, a holy exercise of soul.* When we tell them, that men cannot, without grace, perform a *holy action,* the usual reply is, they have natural or physical ability.

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(a) John, xxi. 7—11. (b) John, i. 9. (c) Titus, ii. 11, 12.

2. As God does not require of his creatures to perform a *moral* action, with physical ability, or, a physical action with moral ability, so he does not require of them to perform either, beyond their strength, or means. He does not require of a child, that degree of labour, which he expects from the brawny arm of a man. Neither does he require a growth in grace, only in proportion to spiritual light. Said the Saviour, "unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required." This is rational, for said He, again, "to whom *men* have committed much, of him *they* will ask the more." The parable of the talents may be referred to here with great advantage. The man who had two, was not required to gain as many as he who had five. Accordingly, making a proper improvement of his two, he was approved in the same decided manner, as he who had gained five. It was said to each, "Well done, good and faithful servant, \* \* \* enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." The condemnation of him who had but one, was not because he had not gained as much as either of the others, but because he did not put it "to the exchangers" and in this way improve it. This view, gives an opportunity of salvation, to both Jews and Heathen.

3. The benevolent author of our being does not punish one man for the sins of another. "In those days they shall say no more, the fathers have eaten a sour grape, and the children's teeth are set on edge \* \* Every man that eateth the sour grape, his teeth shall be set on edge." "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." Thus said the prophets. What said the apostles? "Every man shall bear his own burden." "Who will render unto every man according to his deeds; to them who, by patient continuance in well-doing, seek for glory, and honour, and immortality, *eternal life*—but unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, *indignation and wrath*." This, therefore, destroys the doctrine of imputed sin, to the condemnation of the soul. "Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound." That is, though

men inherit certain disabilities by the fall of their common ancestor, their souls are not condemned for his sin ; and beside, they have an opportunity of salvation from their own sins. This we conceive to be the true exposition of this text. Did it read thus, “ where sin abounded, grace abounded,” we should suppose, that what was lost in Adam was restored in Christ, without any provision, enabling men to escape the consequences of their own transgression.

II. *Another beauty of free salvation, is the impartial and equal love of the God of grace.*

1. We could argue this delightful truth from the perfections of Deity, had we no light on it, from express revelation. These require an impartial being. The supposition of a *partial, perfect* being, is absurd. Our heavenly father therefore, is, impartial. He scatters his blessings all abroad. He confines them not to the Jew, or to the Greek. He acts like the common parent of all. Whatever of inequality there is, in the temporal condition of man, this on the whole, connected with the dispensation under which he lives, must be supposed favourable to his eternal interests. On any other supposition, it would prove that God was partial.

2. Fortunately, we have, on this subject, express revelation. Many are the scriptures to demonstrate it. We can quote but few. The first class are such as call upon men to glorify God. “ O, praise the Lord all ye nations ! praise him, all ye people :—for his merciful kindness is great towards us.” “ Oh, that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men !” The second class consist of such, as declare God’s disposition towards them and his manner of dealing with them.” “ The Lord is good to all; and his tender mercies are over all his works.” “ He causeth the grass to grow for the cattle, and herb for the service of man : that he may bring forth food out of the earth ; and wine that maketh glad the heart of man, and oil to make his face to shine, and bread which strengtheneth man’s heart.” “ As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in

the death of the wicked." "God so loved the world, [not the elect] that he gave his only begotten son, that whosoever believeth in him, should not perish but have everlasting life."

3. We may add, to these considerations, the fact, that all men are the recipients of divine favour. First, they receive the same common blessings. "He maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust." Second, they all enjoy the means of grace in a greater or less degree. Those, who are indulged with the least, have sufficient, if they quench not the spirit." They who enjoy the written word, of course, are the most abundantly blessed with these means, but as an offset to this, not so much is required of them, who have but the light of nature.

(*To be continued.*)

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#### EXHORTATION MEETINGS.

Among other blessings which we, in New-England, inherit from our puritan fathers, is that of religious exhortation meetings, (usually called conferences) in which private brethren, as well as the pastor of a church, improve their various gifts. These meetings were established in the old Plymouth church, and have been more or less kept up, by Congregationalists and Baptists, to the present day. They have been rare with Presbyterians and Episcopalians. Since the introduction of Methodism into the United States, its adherents have generally adopted them. We believe they commonly call such meetings, prayer-meetings. The name, however, can be of no consequence. The following extract from Hubbard's History will show, that they were established by the Church above-mentioned, and that the original brethren of this church had been accustomed to exercise their gifts in Holland.

“To satisfy the reader, how a christian church could, in any tolerable measure, carry on the publick worship of God, without suitable officers, as was the case with those people of Plymouth, we must know that those were a serious and religious people, that knew their own principles—knew and were resolved on the way of their worship, but in many years could not prevail with any to come over to them, and undertake the office of pastor amongst them, at least none in whom they could with full satisfaction acquiesce, and therefore in the meanwhile they were peaceably and judiciously managed by the wisdom of Mr. Brewster, a grave and serious person—ruling elder among them. Besides also several of his people were well gifted, and did spend part of the Lord’s day in their wonted prophesying, to which they had been accustomed by Mr. Robinson. These gifts, while they lasted, made the burthen of the other defect more easily borne.”

These meetings have been too much discouraged and neglected by many professing christians. We cannot doubt, but that they, originally, entered into the constitution of the christian church. An appeal to one passage of holy writ may be sufficient. Paul, in the twelfth of Romans, speaking of different gifts in the church, as belonging not to ministers, exclusively, but to the brethren also, expressly enjoins that “*exhortation*” be attended to. We know not, but, that at some periods of the church, particularly, during the dark ages, such meetings were discontinued—but if they were, one of the most charming and efficient means of grace was laid aside.\*

They are delightfully calculated to promote the spirit of true piety, and encourage and comfort the church. Spiritual brethren rejoice to hear from each other in this way, as it, at least, affords them

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\* One of the great leaders of puritanism, and among the first, to project the colonization of New-England. Like Moses, however, he was not permitted to enter the promised land. His brethren crossed the waters, but he died in Holland.

one evidence that they mutually stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ had made them free. We have no doubt that the exhortations of the brethren, are well calculated to, and do, encourage the hearts and strengthen the hands of a Gospel minister. When his brethren are engaged for Christ, and love to speak of his name, then are they his "glory and crown of rejoicing."

They are extremely serviceable in promoting the spirit of reformation. Nothing is better calculated to take hold of the heart and mind, than christian experience, much of which, is at differet times, related in these meetings. And what is more likely to cheer a disconsolate sinner, than the testimony of a number, that God has been gracious to them—that they were once in the "horrible pit," and "miry clay," but now feel that they stand on the rock of ages? We may add a fact universally known by all well acquainted with these meetings, that a warm address from some pious brother, frequently "kindles a flame of sacred love" in the hearts of all christians present, and impresses the minds of the audience, generally, with the reality and importance of the religion of Jesus.

They are nurseries of the church. Here the various gifts of the brethren are brought forward, become fully formed, are marked by the church, and called out into the ministry, as conviction prevails that their possessors are called of the Holy Ghost.

We are, therefore, the firm friends of conference meetings. We would recommend them to all christian churches. We are aware that the gifts of some of the brethren are not brilliant, and not well cultivated, and some judgment should be exercised in directing their use; but we are not advocates for too much restraint. The broken English, which we are obliged often to encounter, is in our opinion, infinitely outweighed by the spirit of real godliness apparent in the speakers.

## GENERAL BAPTISTS IN THE UNITED STATES.

Almost all our readers are sufficiently acquainted with the Particular or Calvinistick Baptists of our country, and know them to be a flourishing and powerful body of Christians. It is therefore unnecessary for us now to say any thing concerning them. As information respecting the General or Arminian Baptists, is not so generally diffused, it may gratify some to have the following summary. We have, several times, said something of one class of these, to which we shall refer in the proper place. In this summary, we have made a liberal use of a letter by Elder Reuben Potter, Jun. of this state, to Mr. George Smallfield, Hackney, near London, first printed in an English Magazine. We mention them in the order in which Mr Potter classes them.

*Seventh-day Baptists.* This denomination is of European origin. They have in this country, an association called "Seventh-day Baptist General Conference." The number of their churches is about sixteen; containing between two and three thousand members. There are besides a few scattering churches in different parts of the country, which, for various reasons, do not unite with the conference: the chief of which, probably is, they practice open communion: whereas, the conference are limitarians. Belonging under the head of general baptists, they will of course be known, as being anti-calvinistick. We understand that some of their preachers are Unitarians. We believe that the first Seventh-day Baptist, who arrived in New-England, if not in the United States, landed at Newport, in this state, in the beginning of 1665. About this time, the first church of this denomination was, probably, established there. From a branch of it in New-London, sprung the Rogerenes, about the year 1677, a remnant of which sect remains to this day.

*II. Six-Principle Baptists.* This class of Baptists in the United States, consists of about fifteen churches, and fifteen hundred members. They are close-communicants, trinitarians and anti-calvinistick. It is said

that they derive their name from the former part of the 6th chapter of Hebrews, and that the laying on of hands, subsequent to baptism, is thought, by them, to be an indispensable pre-requisite to church membership.

**III. Arminian, or Free-Will Baptists.** For their origin, number, and meetings, see 7th number of this work, 165th page. For their sentiments, discipline, &c. see 8th number, 176th page.

**IV. Christians.** This class of Baptists had its origin in the year 1803; the first church of which, was founded in Portsmouth, N. H. They are, in general, Unitarians. They love the doctrine of free-grace, in opposition to Calvinism; practise open-communion, and quote Acts xi. 26. xxvi. 28; I. Peter 4—16, in defence of their name. The present number of their churches, is, about 250—of their members, between fifteen and twenty thousand. Their churches are organized into conferences, and these have formed another, called the "UNITED STATES' GENERAL ANNUAL CHRISTIAN CONFERENCE," which convenes in the month of September. They are said to be rapidly increasing. We understand, that in one state alone, during the past year, seven ministers from other denominations joined them. They have the reputation of being remarkably spiritual and pious. We have heard some of their ministers preach, and take pleasure in acknowledging, that they seemed to be anointed with the true unction.

**P. S.** Two new sects of Baptists, have, not long since, arisen in the United States. We believe the object of one, is, to bear their testimony and use their influence against slavery, and that of the other, to promote the practice of open-communion. We rather suppose, though we are not certain, that both these sects are Calvinistick. For further particulars concerning them, we refer our readers to Rev. Mr. Benedict's History of All Religions, which will soon be in circulation.

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#### LAST PRAYERS.

Meetings for publick worship are, frequently, concluded with a prayer: and it is usual to pray at the

close of a sermon. It is often said that prayers in general, are too long, and they, who are in the habit of publick prayer, are often reminded, that the prayers of scripture are short and pertinent. We are not now about to give a treatise on this subject—our present business, is, with last prayers.

If an introductory prayer should be short and pertinent, surely, the concluding one should be of the same character. The contrary, however, frequently happens: this practice should be corrected. When a sermon is over, the meeting is thought to be nearly to a close. The same may be said of exhortation meetings, when one is called upon to make the last prayer. The remark is, brethren it is time to close. The last prayer should embrace a concise notice of the subject of a discourse, or the leading topicks of a conference, and a commendation of ourselves to the mercies of God. Peculiar circumstances, will no doubt, justify a departure from this rule, but, in general, it should be as strictly observed as possible.

One other remark on this subject, suggests itself to our consideration. He, who preaches, should commonly, offer the last prayer. His mind and feelings are excited, and his thoughts will easily flow into the channel of his sermon:—Whereas, if some other person offer it, though his thoughts may be appropriate, (which will not always be the case) his feelings may be dull, and some injury may be done to the effect of a discourse.  
*A word to the wise is sufficient.*

#### A CONVERSION—*Concluded.*

Twice during this season of seeking, I came near taking up with a false hope; and once I was even encouraged by a theological student to consider myself a regenerated person! I was so terribly distressed and agitated at times that I actually sat down and began to write a farewell, expecting that I should soon be

obliged to lay violent hands on myself, to rid myself of my insupportable trouble. But the Lord preserved me from the awful deed. In addition to this, I was tempted, on a certain time, to think that I was Christ; and had I not been an honest and earnest seeker, I might, perhaps have been left to fall into the delusion, and so have been one of the false Christs foretold by Christ himself. Nor, after my own experience upon the subject, do I wonder that the devil is able to deceive some of our race, and make them fancy themselves Christ.

I was dealt with very closely. I found it necessary for me so to have my spiritual concerns, that they would bear the review of God in the dead of night, when all about was still, and the mind had nothing to flatter it, but was under the necessity of being honest and sincere. I had now become almost a stranger to sleep. Lying one night about midnight, thinking upon my case, my mind was turned upon the events of the past day and evening. Had I done my duty in all things? I thought I had not, inasmuch as I had not made known my exercises of mind and feelings to others as much as I should have done. Well, would I be faithful, and let them be known the next day? I fully resolved to do it. There was no reserve, no condition in the resolution. I heartily and unconditionally submitted to this last, and, at that time, only thing required of me; the tears of godly sorrow, grief and penitence for my ingratitude and sins, had already, I trust, several times washed the feet of Jesus. In short, I had sought, had been convinced, had repented, and been led along in the Lord's way and time to that spot whither all, before having a foretaste of heaven, must in my opinion, come—"unconditional submission."

Words would fail me, did I attempt to describe the heavenly joy which I then felt. My whole body, and soul, and spirit, were wrought upon in a manner beyond my comprehension. My love to God was exquisite, and capable only of being felt. It seemed strange to me why I should be thus favoured and distinguished of God, seeing I was so undeserving of it.

After remaining in this state a little while, I was left in my natural one. To work went my head to account for this wonderful event, upon philosophick principles. I knew not but my singular feelings might have been produced by my lying in the position in which I did; however, I concluded that if they were supernatural, God could make me experience them again, lie in what position I might: so I altered it. Directly upon this, I was asked in a still small voice thus: "Believest thou that I am able to do this again?" This seemed to be the voice of Christ—that very Christ in whom Jews and Deists disbelieve, and in whom I had disbelieved. I thought I did fully believe him able to do the like again. Suddenly, I was again visited as at the first. So ravishing, so exquisite, so overwhelming, so extreme was my joy, and of a nature so entirely unearthly, that it seemed to me the human body could not long exist in such a state. It seemed as if mine was a joy like that of the saints in heaven, and I longed to be with them, and yet had a desire to honour God some upon the earth. O! that I may be enabled still to do it.

In a short time, I was again left in my usual state. I was left in a very exhausted frame of body.

For many nights previous to this, I had been unable to get any thing like usual, natural sleep. The hand of God was heavy and peculiar upon me. Did I get into a drowse, I would be instantly started from it, just upon the borders of death, struggling violently for breath! But after experiencing the visitation of the spirit as I have just been describing, I fell into a calm sleep, and slept quietly the remainder of the night!

The following morning, agreeably to my determination the preceding night, I related my exercises to my connexions and others.

The same day, if I rightly remember, while engaged in my usual employment, (for I was now able to resume it) striving my utmost to do every thing right, to keep my mind in a proper frame, &c. my thoughts were led up to God. How easy did it seem to me to be for him to make the performance of my duty easy to me, by

sending me aid from heaven. I had faith in this. Scarcely had this reflection passed my mind, when rapid as thought, an invisible emanation from the throne of God, descended upon my head, and, in a twinkling, penetrated to my heart. O Lord God, thanks unto thee for the out-pouring of thy spirit upon me! Thanks to God eternally! The spirit was poured out upon me in so great a degree at this time, that I found it necessary for me to retire, that I might not be exposed before those with whom I was; my body as well as my soul being greatly wrought upon. I could hardly stand under this mighty emanation from the place where the holy God alone was, upon its first descent upon me; and so great was its operation in me, that I could not go without staggering, nor stand without reeling! I have no doubt but my countenance beamed with holy joy. Give me "the flames of love." Give me the power of godliness as well as a form. Give me devotion that feels, love that burns. Let me be overwhelmed.

But to return. After retiring, I received fresh supplies of the spirit. My joy was almost too great for me to contain. My cup ran over. O what a good God have I, and what a good one may every other one have that will seek him. I returned again to my business. The influence of the spirit did not leave me, though its overwhelming force abated. It began to rise upwards, and spread itself from my heart; and I was gradually filled—filled with the Holy Ghost. A heavenly calm diffused itself throughout my frame. I was completely immersed. I was baptized with the Holy Ghost! My very voice was supernaturally mild and pleasant. Nothing ruffled me; and I was enabled to pursue my business with the greatest ease, and continue in that devotional frame which I had so much desired, besides. The complete performance of duty was now perfectly easy to me.

Near this time, I was impressed to arise in meeting, and "tell what the Lord had done for my soul." O, which way should I get along now? What could I

do? The impression increased. I foresaw that I must get up, yet it seemed about impossible. I was pressed mightily to arise; still I continued on my seat, though very uneasily. At length that motive was brought in to command my obedience, which has never yet failed with me: God grant it never may. "Dost thou want to be left by this spirit," was the final step taken with me. Agitated, I arose, and spake.

In the afternoon of the following Sabbath, while sitting in meeting, I experienced something different from any of my former exercises. It was "the peace of God which passeth all understanding." It was not properly joy, nor was it a natural calm and quietude; but it was a heavenly, unspeakable peace. Those who never experienced it have not the most remote idea of it, and those who have, do not fully understand it notwithstanding. "It passeth all understanding."

As I returned from meeting, I seemed scarcely to bear my weight upon the ground, so lightsome and easy, and so filled with this incomprehensible, indescribable peace was I. My whole frame was pervaded by this wonderful tranquillity.

On reaching home, I took a hymn book, and began to sing. I was all in tune. I seemed to myself like a musical instrument with ten thousand strings. My mouth only seemed a vent for the strains of devotion which flowed copiously and fervently from my heart. My voice had in it a divine sound, altogether different from my natural voice; and my nerves, muscles, chords, yea, the very hairs of my head seemed to join me in the hymn. My singing seemed to rise to heaven, and mingle with the harmony of the blessed.

During the course of my religious exercises, I have seen that I deserved to be eternally miserable; so that I cannot agree with those who think the sinner does not deserve endless misery.

#### HISTORICAL.

**ROGER WILLIAMS**, was banished from Massachusetts, October 1635. Concerning this gentleman, there is

little or no mention on the records of the Salem Church, of which he was pastor, and which had him under dealings on account of the same principles for which he was banished. It is supposed, that the following extract, from their records, accounts for the fact. The proceedings against him, were, probably, informal, or such as they may well say, *reflected* upon particular persons, or the church, as the report states; and for this reason were expunged from the church book which contained them, which was afterwards destroyed, according to the remark of Dr. Prince which follows the report.—*Ed. R. I. B.*

*"Voted, (Sept 10, 1660) That Maj. Hathorne, Mr. Batters and Mr. Price, the two deacons, together with the pastor, [Mr. John Higginson,] be desired to review the church book and report thereon."*

*Report:* "They conceived the book itself and paper being old, not well bound, and in some places having been wet and not legible is not likely to continue long to be of any use to posterity, therefore they thought it best if it were kept in safety by the elders, by that means it might be of good use so long as it will last. Only some few passages in it which do reflect upon particular persons or upon the whole church, without any church vote and without due proof they did mark in the book as thinking they should be struck out.

1. Also in the new book that in all matters tending to censure, nothing to be brought to the church nor left upon record, without sufficient proof.

2. That all church votes or events be so recorded as to be read unto the church if it may be at the time when the vote is passed, if not to be read the first thing the next church meeting.

3. That any brother have liberty to see the church book for his satisfaction.

These were consented to, first allowing one month time for such as desired it, to see those passages mentioned.

N. B. Rev. Dr. Prince says, that upon his settlement he was informed by the elders of the church, that the

old church book was destroyed soon after the above votes passed, a list of church members from the beginning having been previously copied.

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#### POWER OF RELIGION TO SUSTAIN IN SUFFERING.

It is well known that the early history of New-England abounds with stories of the sufferings of the Baptists by the hands of the Pedobaptists. In lately looking over a volume of Backus' History, we were charmed with the wonderful constancy and holy joy of a Mr. Obadiah Holmes, who was arrested, imprisoned, fined and whipped, in Boston, in 1651, because he was a Baptist, and worshipped God according to the dictates of his own conscience. Throughout his trial, and imprisonment, and suffering, he manifested in a high degree, the spirit and temper of a Christian martyr. We have not room for the whole of his narrative, but must content ourselves with giving an extract relative to his carriage and exercises of soul, during his whipping, which, we are told, was dreadfully severe. Gov. Jencks says, "Mr. Holmes was whipped thirty stripes, and in such an unmerciful manner, that in many days, if not for some weeks, he could take no rest, but as he lay upon his knees and elbows, not being able to suffer any part of his body to touch the bed whereon he lay." Here follows the extract :—

" And as the man began to lay the strokes upon my back, I said to the people, though my flesh should fail, and my spirit should fail, yet my God would not fail. So it pleased the Lord to come in, and so to fill my heart and tongue as a vessel full, and with an audible voice I broke forth, praying unto the Lord, not to lay this sin to their charge ; and telling the people, that now I found he did not fail me, and therefore, now I should trust him for ever who failed me not ; for in truth, as the strokes fell upon me, I had such a spiritual manifestation of God's presence as the like thereof I never had nor felt, nor can with fleshly tongue express ; and the outward pain was so removed from me, that indeed I am not able to declare it to you, it was so easy to me, that I could well bear it, yea and in a manner felt it not although it was grievous, as the spectators said, the man striking with all his strength (yea spitting in his hand three times, as many affirmed) with a three-

corded whip, giving me therewith thirty strokes. When he had loosed me from the post, having joyfulness in my heart and cheerfulness in my countenance, as the spectators observed, I told the magistrates, you have struck me as with roses ; and said moreover, although the Lord hath made it easy to me, yet I pray God it may not be laid to your charge.

### PAUL AND CICERO.

*Cicero*, set to manage concerns of a worldly nature, and having to address himself only to feelings natural to men, found the passions which he wished to move already existing: *Paul* went forth as an instrument to create new tastes, and to awaken feelings which nothing but a supernatural influence could create. Cicero could rouse the *selfish* passions—could give private interest a tongue to plead his cause; and never appealed to any thing in man superior to the natural love of justice, or the love of country: Paul, commissioned to spread the triumphs of universal benevolence, aimed to excite none but holy feelings. Cicero sometimes found it his interest, by unlawful means, to enlist the prejudices of the judges. He would introduce the accused, with his wife and children, clad in habiliments of mourning, to awaken passions which had no connexion with the justice of his cause: Paul presented nothing but the truths of God. Cicero's object was to make men act: Paul's aim was lost unless they acted from *holy motives*. Cicero had nothing to do with the dispositions of men, further than to *carry a point*: Paul's *point* was the *disposition itself*. Cicero relied on his powers of persuasion, as he depended on any of the stated operations of nature; for there was a natural connexion between the motives which he urged, and the emotion or action which he wished to produce: Paul saw no such connexion between his preaching and the salvation of men; and he

went from country to country with an eye of dependence immediately fixed on the throne of God. And yet Paul was not the less eloquent. He knew that he had as good a *right*, and he found as much *encouragement* as the Roman orator, to employ all the arts of persuasion; only he confined himself to the exhibition of *divine truth*. And it was not in vain that he was more eloquent than other men. Not only did he charm, and chain attention to his lips; not only did he command the natural avenues to the soul; but, by the flashes of his eloquence, he threw light upon the *understanding* and *conscience*, as another man could not have done.

GRiffin.

#### ATHEISM REFUTED.

The scriptures inform us, that “the fool hath said in his heart, there is no God.” The following thoughts on the divine existence are pertinent and unanswerable, and well prove the sentiment of the sacred text.

“The wonder then turns on the great process, by which a man could grow to the immense intelligence that can know that there is no God. What ages and what lights are requisite for this attainment! This intelligence involves the very attributes of divinity, while a God is denied. For unless this man is omnipresent, unless he is at this moment in every place in the universe, he cannot know but there may be in some place manifestations of a deity by which even he would be overpowered. If he does not know absolutely every agent in the universe, the one that he does not know may be God. If he is not himself the chief agent in the universe, and does not know what is so, that which is so may be God. If he is not in absolute possession of all the propositions that constitute universal truth, the one which he wants may be, that there is a God. If he cannot with certainty assign the cause of all that he perceives to exist, that cause may be a God. If he does not know every thing that has been done in the immeasurable ages that are

past, some things may have been done by a God. Thus, unless he knows all things, that is, precludes another deity by being one himself, he cannot know that the being whose existence he rejects, does not exist. But he must know that he does not exist, else he deserves equal contempt and compassion for the temerity with which he firmly avows his rejection and acts accordingly. And yet a man of *ordinary* age and intelligence may present himself to you with the avowal of being thus distinguished from the crowd; and if he would describe the manner in which he has attained this eminence, you would feel a melancholy interest in contemplating that process of which the result is so portentous."

FOSTER.

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**EXTRACT FROM BEATTIE'S ESSAY ON TRUTH.**

(Concluded.)

Some of the fatalists are willing to reconcile their system with our natural notions of moral good and evil; but all they have been able to do is, to remove the difficulty a step or two farther off. But the most considerable of that party are not solicitous to render these points consistent. If they can establish necessity, they leave natural religion to shift for itself. Mr. Hume, in particular, affirms, that on his principles it is impossible for natural reason to vindicate the character of the deity. Had this author been possessed of one grain of that modesty which he recommends in the conclusion of his essay; had he thought it worth his while to sacrifice a little pittance of ignominious applause to the happiness of human kind; he would have shuddered at the thought of inculcating a doctrine which he knew to be irreconcilable with this great first principle of religion; and of which, therefore, he must have known that it tended to overturn the only durable foundation of human society and

human happiness. The assertors of human liberty have always maintained, that to believe all actions and intentions necessary, is the same thing as to believe that man is not an accountable being, or, in other words, not a moral agent. And indeed this notion is natural to every person who has courage to trust his own experience, without seeking to puzzle plain matter of fact with verbal distinctions and metaphysical refinement. But it is said, the sense of moral beauty and turpitude still remains with us even after we are convinced that actions and intentions are necessary; that this sense maketh us moral agents; and therefore that our moral agency is perfectly consistent with our necessary agency.

But this is nothing to the purpose; it is putting us off with mere words. For what is moral agency, and what is implied in it? this at least must be implied in it, that we ought to do some things and not to do others. But if every intention and action of my life is fixed by eternal laws, which I can neither elude or alter, it is as absurd to say to me, you ought to be honest to-morrow, as to say, you ought to stop the motion of the planets to-morrow, unless some events depend upon my determination; ought and ought not, have no meaning when applied to me. Moral agency further implies that we are accountable for our conduct; and that if we do what we ought not to do, we deserve blame and punishment. My conscience tells me, that I am accountable for those actions only that are in my power; and neither blames nor approves, in myself or in others, that conduct which is the effect, not of choice, but of necessity. Convince me that all my actions are equally necessary, and you silence my conscience for ever; or, at least prove it to be a fallacious and impertinent monitor; you will then convince me that all circumspection is unnecessary, and all remorse absurd. And is it a matter of little moment, whether I believe my moral feelings authentick and true, or equivocal and fallacious? Can any principle be of more fatal consequence to me, or to society, than

to believe, that the dictates of conscience are false, unreasonable, or insignificant? Yet this is one certain effect of my becoming a fatalist, or even a sceptick in regard to moral liberty. I observe that when a man's understanding begins to be so far perverted by debauchery, as to make him imagine his crimes unavoidable, from that moment he begins to think them innocent, and deems it a sufficient apology, that, in respect of them, he is no longer a free, but a necessary agent. The drunkard pleads his constitution, the blasphemer urges the invincible force of habit, and the sensualist would have us believe, that his appetites are too strong to be resisted. Suppose all men so far perverted as to argue in the same manner with regard to crimes of every kind; then it is certain, that all men would be equally disposed to think all crimes innocent. And what would be the consequence? Licentiousness, misery, and desolation, irremediable and universal. If God intended that men should be happy, and that the human race should continue for many generations, he certainly intended also that men should believe themselves free, moral and accountable creatures.

## THE PSALMS.

*From Horne's Preface—Extract No. 2.*

\* \* The second Psalm presenteth itself, to all appearance, as an inauguration-hymn, composed by David, the anointed of Jehovah, when by him crowned with victory, and placed triumphant on the sacred hill of Sion. But let us turn to Acts iv. 25. and there we find the apostles, with one voice, declaring the Psalm to be descriptive of the exaltation of Jesus Christ, and of the opposition raised against his Gospel, both by Jew and Gentile.

In the eighth Psalm we imagine the writer to be setting forth the pre-eminence of man in general, above

the rest of the creation ; but by Heb. ii. 6. we are informed, that the supremacy conferred on the second Adam, the man Christ Jesus, over all things in heaven and earth, is the subject treated of.

St. Peter stands up, Acts ii. 25. and preaches the resurrection of Jesus from the latter part of the sixteenth Psalm ; and, lo, three thousand souls are converted by the sermon.

Of the eighteenth Psalm we are told, in the course of the sacred history, 2 Sam xxii. that " David spake before the Lord the words of that song, in the day that the Lord delivered him out of the hand of all his enemies, and out of the hand of Saul." Yet in Rom. xv. 9. the 50th verse of that Psalm is adduced as a proof that " the Gentiles should glorify God for his mercy in Jesus Christ, as it is written, For this cause will I confess to thee among the Gentiles, and sing unto thy name."

In the nineteenth Psalm, David seems to be speaking of the material heavens and their operations only, when he says, " Their sound is gone out into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world." But St. Paul, Rom. x. 18. quotes the passage to show, that the gospel had been universally published by the apostles.

The twenty-second Psalm Christ appropriated to himself, by beginning it in the midst of his suffering on the cross ; " My God, my God," &c. Three other verses of it are in the New Testament applied to him ; and the words of the 8th verse were actually used by the chief priests, when they reviled him ; " He trusted in God." &c. Matt. xxvii. 43.

When David saith, in the fortieth Psalm, " Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire—Lo, I come to do thy will :" we might suppose him only to declare, in his own person, that obedience is better than sacrifice. But from Heb. x. 5. we learn, that Messiah, in that place, speaketh of his advent in the flesh, to abolish the legal sacrifice, and to do away sin, by the oblation of himself, once for all.

That tender and pathetick complaint, in the forty-first Psalm, “Mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, hath lifted his heel against me,” undoubtedly might be, and probably was, originally uttered by David, upon the revolt of his old friend and counsellor, Ahitophel, to the party of his rebellious son, Absalom. But we are certain, from John xiii. 18. that this Scripture was fulfilled, when Christ was betrayed by his apostate disciple—“I speak not of you all; I know whom I have chosen; but that the Scriptures may be fulfilled, He that eateth bread with me, has lifted up his heel against me.”

The forty-fourth Psalm we must suppose to have been written on an occasion of a persecution, under which the church at that time laboured; but a verse of it is cited, Rom. viii. 36. as expressive of what Christians were to suffer on their blessed Master’s account; “as it is written, for thy sake are we killed all day long: we are counted as sheep appointed to be slain.”

A quotation from the forty-fifth Psalm, in Heb. i. 8. certifies us that the whole is addressed to the Son of God, and therefore celebrates his spiritual union with the church, and the happy fruits of it.

The sixty-eighth Psalm, though apparently conversant about Israelitish victories, the translation of the ark to Sion, and the services of the tabernacle, yet does, under those figures, treat of Christ’s resurrection, his going up on high, leading captivity captive, pouring out the gifts of the Spirit, erecting his church in the world, and enlarging it by the accession of the nations to the faith; as will be evident to any one who considers the force and consequence of the apostle’s citation from it, Ephes. iv. 7, 8. “Unto every one of us is given grace, according to the measure of the gift of Christ. Wherefore he saith, when he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.”

*From the Baltimore Patriot.*

The following lines were occasioned by seeing a beautiful young lady as she passed an aged blind man, who was sitting on a door sill asking alms in Market street, dexterously slip a dollar into his hand, while she told him, as I suppose, where she lived for she spoke in so low a voice, and with such an evident design of concealing her benevolence from human view, that I only heard her say, "take this and call on me to-morrow." We publish them as a tribute to her, and that others may know how beautiful beauty is, when accompanied with a feeling heart.

The rose on beauty's cheek is fair,  
And sweet those lips of coral seemeth ;  
And yet, unless there's pity there,  
In vain the eye of beauty beameth :  
A tear for others' wo by far,  
Is fairer than those beauties are.

But when down beauty's cheek we see  
A tear for sorrow gently stealing ;  
And when a sigh for misery  
Proclaims a heart of tender feeling,  
We point to heaven and declare,  
Those beauties were imprinted there.

I saw an aged son of wo,  
Whose journey here was nearly ended ;  
I saw his tears of sorrow flow,  
While he his trembling hand extended—  
Feeble and old, and lame, and blind,  
And shivering in the chilly wind.

I saw a beauteous form pass by,  
And cast on him a look of sorrow ;  
I heard her say, with tearful eye,  
"Take this, and call on me to-morrow."  
I knew her not, nor could I even  
Learn whence she came ; she's known in HEAVEN.

#### PROGRESS OF LIGHT AND LOVE.

It affords us sincere pleasure to state, that a Baptist Church, in Cranston, under the pastoral care of Elder Jonathan Knight, have lately adopted the practice of OPEN COMMUNION, and the principles of FREE-SALVATION. "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory."

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This work is printed monthly, at the JOURNAL OFFICE, Providence, (R. I.) where subscriptions will be received. Terms 12 1-2 cents each number.